



U.S. Embassy

Press Release

April 20, 2004

Earth Day 2004 Message from U.S. Ambassador Russell F. Freeman

On April 22, Earth Day, the United States joins with the world in marking its deep commitment to preserve the bounty and beauty of the earth for future generations. I can imagine no better place to represent the U.S. as Ambassador on Earth Day than Belize, a country so blessed and proud of its natural beauty and wonder.

In the 34 years that have passed since U.S. senator Gaylord Nelson launched Earth Day, the United States has continued to show its ability to set, achieve and maintain a high standard for environmental protections. We have laid out ambitious new goals such as the reduction of mercury emissions in energy production. President Bush pledged that the United States will meet the challenge of addressing long-term global climate change by reducing the ratio of greenhouse gas emissions to economic output by 18 percent by 2012 compared to 2002.

The United States also recognizes its responsibility to assist others, particularly in the developing world, to create more favorable living conditions for their citizens while insuring judicious care of natural resources. Happily, these efforts show in Belize.

For example, the United States Government, through the Agency for International Development, committed over BZ\$ 3 million in 2003 to environmental programs in Belize, such as the Mesoamerican Reef Alliance and the El Pilar Forest Garden Network. These programs seek to protect and preserve the country's natural and cultural heritage in a responsible and sustainable manner. I believe that our two countries can benefit a great deal from this cooperation.

Together, we have the ability and responsibility to protect our natural world. With the world's population expected to double in the next few generations, it is our duty to prepare today's children to make informed choices in order to sustain our earth.

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